The permissible levels of exposure in the work environment in respect of asbestos, silica dust_ cotton dust, lead, manganese and other toxic chemicals etc. have been laid down under the Factories Act, 1948. The industries which handle asbestos, Silica (glass and ceramic etc.), coal, lead and its compound, non-ferrous metallurgical industries, insecricides and pesticides etc. have been included in the list of industries involving hazardous processes under the Factories Act, 1948. A new chapter foe regulating safety and health aspects in the hazardous process industries has been incorporated in the above Act in the year 1987. The provisions of the Act are required to be complied with by the 'Occupier' of the Factory and enforced toy the respective State Governments' Union Territory administrations.

Misappropriation of Povident Fund Accumulations

@2416. SHRI B. K. HARIPRA-SAD: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government are aware of the increasing incidence of mis-appropriation of provident Fund accumulations by the corporate sector both, private and public and if so, the names of the companies and the sums defalcated *by* each during the last three years; and

(b) what steps are being taken to protest the interests of the affected workers and their families?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI

@ Previousy Unstarred Question 1602 transferred from 9th March, 1993.

P. A. SANGMA); (a) and (b) The information lis being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House in due course.

Functioning of regional officers of provident fund commissioners

2417. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the various Regional Offices of Provident Fund Commissioners are functioning in a very inefficient way;

(b) if so, what steps are being taken to modernise and streamline the functioning of the Regional Offices of Provident Fund Commissioners; and

..(c) what is the number of cases pending with Regional Office of Provident Fund Commissioner in Hyderabad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) and (b) The functioning of the Regional Provident Fund Commissioners is generally satisfactory. However, in order to provide prompt service to the E.P.F. subscribers and streamlining, the accounting procedure, a massive computerisation programme has been launched in the EPF Organisation. A central action plan covering substantial areas of work has also been initiated for improving the system's efficiency and effectiveness.

(c) As on 31.12.1992 as against 41547 cases received relating to final settlement, 902 cases were pending.

राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण श्रम आयोग को मान्यता दिया जाना

2418. श्री राम नरेश यादव : क्या श्रम मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण श्रम आयोग को पूर्णतया और स्थायी

रूप से मान्यता देने का विचार रखती है ;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उसका ब्यौरा क्या है ; और

(ग) इस आयोग से ग्रामीण श्रमिकों को क्या-क्या लाभ मिलने की संभावना है ?

श्रम मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री पी०ए० संगमा) : (क) से (ग) अगस्त, 1987 में गठित राष्ट्रीय ग्रामीण श्रम आयोग (एन०सी०आर०एल०) को इसकी रिपोर्ट प्राप्त होने के बाद 31-7-1991 को समाप्त कर दिया गया था। आयोग ने अपनी रिपोर्ट में अनेक सिफारिशें की हैं, सरकार ने जिनकी जांच करली है, और ग्रामीण श्रमिकों की आर्थिक, सामाजिक और रहन-सहन की दशाओं में सुधार लाने के उद्देश्य से इन सिफरिशों के कार्यान्वियन के लिये आवश्यक कार्रवाई शुरू कर दी है।

Child labour in Assam

2419. SHRIMATI BASANTI SAR-MA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

. .(a) whether the number of Child Labour in Assam is on the increase;

(b) if so, what is the present number thereof;

(c) what is the percentage of rise in child labour during each of the last three years;

(d) whether Government propose to formulate any scheme for the Wel fare of Child Labour; and

(e) if so, what are the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA): (a) to (c) Authentic data regarding number of child labour is available through census which is conducted every ten years. As per the 1971 census there were 2,39,349 child workers in Assam. In 1981 census could not be conducted in Assam due to the then prevailling disturbed conditions. 1991 census figures are yet to come.

(d) and (e) Legislative provisions have been made in various laws to protect children from exploitation at work and to improve their working conditions in addition, the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 prohibits employment of children in certain hazardous occupations and processes and regulate their employment in certain other areas.

The National Policy on Child Labour, 1987 has been formulated which inter-alia envisages focusing on general development programme for the benefit of child labour and project-based plan of action in areas of high concentration of child labour.

Financial assistance to voluntary organisations is provided for taking up action-oriented projects. In additlion, with ILO's assistance, two project for the benefit of working children namely IPEC (International Programme on Elimination of Child Labour) and CLASP (Child Labour Action and Support Programme) have also been taken up.

ESI Hospitals/Dispensarieg In Madhya Pradesh

2420. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of ESI hospitals I dispensaries which have been set up at different places in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) whether Government propose to upgrade some of those hospitals! dispensaries;